United Nations S/PV.4869

Security Council

Fifty-eighth year

Provisional

4869th meeting

Friday, 21 November 2003, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Gaspar Martins	(Angola)
Members:	Bulgaria	Mr. Raytchev
	Cameroon	Mr. Belinga-Eboutou
	Chile	Mr. Muñoz
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Guinea	Mr. Sow
	Mexico	Mr. Pujalte
	Pakistan	Mr. Khalid
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Spain	Ms. Menéndez
	Syrian Arab Republic	Mr. Mekdad
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

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03-62723 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

The President: The Security Council will now begin consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in prior consultations.

At this meeting the Security Council will hear briefings by His Excellency Mr. John Negroponte, the representative of the United States of America, and His Excellency Sir Emyr Jones Parry, the representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

Mr. Negroponte (United States of America): When we came together on 21 August to discuss the implementation of resolution 1483 (2003), it was in the wake of the tragic attack of 19 August against United Nations headquarters in Baghdad. Three short months later, even more innocent people have sacrificed their lives in support of a vision of an Iraq that is a democratic, pluralistic country at peace with its neighbours and a full member of the international community. The same forces that have for so long plagued the Iraqi people continue to resort to murder and intimidation to prevent the realization of this vision. We saw these forces strike again in the heinous 12 November attack against the Italian contingent courageously serving in Nasiriyah. However, they have not and will not succeed in preventing the emergence of a new Iraq.

The people of Iraq are achieving success on a daily basis, some of which we will be discussing today. Yes, there are difficulties, and the price paid is high. Violence is directed against the Iraqi people and all those who are trying to assist them in creating a new Iraq. The international community owes it to the future peace and security of the region, as well as to the memory of the victims of 19 August, 12 November and other attacks, to build upon the unanimous passage of resolution 1511 (2003) and help the Iraqi people defend themselves against those who do not want the new Iraq to succeed.

Iraqis are well aware of the role they must play in their own defence, and they are taking on increasing responsibility for their security every day. The Iraqi people are working to rebuild a strong Iraqi police force and to set up a new Iraqi army.

Iraqis also continue to take over administrative responsibilities and to provide for the delivery of basic services to their country's 25 million people. Today, Iraq's ministries are run by Iraqi ministers, appointed by and reporting to the Iraqi Governing Council. Iraqis are increasingly at the forefront of the reconstruction effort, from electricity to oil to schools. And today the oil-for-food programme comes to an end. This is one more important step in the establishment of a free Iraq, where the resources and wealth of the nation are used by and for the Iraqi people as they take charge of their future.

Regarding Iraq's political transition, we have always advocated the most rapid transfer practicable of governing authority to the Iraqi people. The 15 November announcement by the Governing Council of a political process to establish a representative transitional national assembly to assume full sovereign powers in 2004 was a dramatic step forward, and one that should be welcomed and supported by the international community.

This timetable, as called for by resolution 1511 (2003), ensures that Iraqis quickly take control of their own affairs, while basic freedoms and rights for all Iraqis are protected under the law. And, in accordance with the wishes of the Iraqi people, a permanent constitution will be drafted by a constitutional convention directly elected by the Iraqi people. The Governing Council's announcement is an important step toward realizing the vision of Iraq as a democratic, pluralistic country at peace with its neighbours.

Under the process announced on 15 November, a transitional national assembly will be formed to elect an executive branch, select ministers and serve as a legislative body. By 30 June 2004, this new transitional administration will assume full responsibility for governing Iraq. The Coalition Provisional Authority will then dissolve, as will the Iraqi Governing Council.

The Transitional National Assembly will be formed through caucuses at the provincial level. The selection and structure and powers of the Assembly will be established by a fundamental law, with basic principles of openness and transparency established as part of the 15 November agreement. The delegates to

the Transitional Assembly will be selected no later than 31 May 2004.

The fundamental law will protect freedom of speech and religion and will include a statement of equal rights for all Iraqis. The law will define the relationship between the central Government and provincial authorities. Importantly, the law will have an expiration date, by which time a permanent constitution for Iraq is to be drafted and a new Government of Iraq elected.

The process announced on 15 November establishes a timeline for the direct election of a constitutional convention, no later than 15 March 2005, to draft a permanent constitution for Iraq. The constitution will be ratified through a popular referendum, and a new Iraqi Government will be elected under terms of the ratified constitution no later than 31 December 2005.

As Iraqis assume increased responsibility for their own security and governance, those who seek to undermine a free and democratic Iraq will be further isolated. These basic steps — increased assumption by Iraqis for security, creation of the Governing Council, appointment of effective ministers to run Iraqi ministries, and continuing transfer of political authority to Iraqis — are part of our planning for post-Saddam Iraq.

We are on the offensive in Iraq. While those who traffic in evil work murder innocents, Coalition and Iraqi forces are adapting to defeat the enemy and will prevail.

Yesterday in London, President Bush and Prime Minister Blair reaffirmed our long-term commitment to Iraq. I quote from their joint statement:

> "The United States and the United Kingdom stand ready to support the Transitional Administration in its task of building a new Iraq and its democratic institutions. Our military participation in the multinational force in Iraq will serve the Iraqi people until the Iraqis themselves are able to discharge full responsibility for their own security. At the same time, we hope that international partners will increasingly participate in the multinational force."

The continued support of the international community in reconstruction efforts is also critical. Last month, the international community came together when the Security Council adopted resolution 1511 (2003) and pledged over $33 billion in support to Iraq at the Madrid donors' conference. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Spanish Government for its leadership in hosting the donors' conference, which included representatives from 73 countries and 20 international organizations. Much more, of course, remains to be done and additional contributions from all assembled here are very much encouraged.

As President Bush and Prime Minister Blair have stressed many times, the United Nations has a vital role to play in Iraq. We would welcome the return of United Nations international personnel to Iraq to carry out the mandate called for in resolutions 1483 (2003) and 1511 (2003). We stand ready to discuss with United Nations officials appropriate security support, as envisioned under resolution 1511 (2003).

Security and stability underpin all other efforts on the ground, and creating these conditions constitutes one of the main priorities for the Coalition Provisional Authority in its work with the Iraqi people. Despite the killings, bombings and other attacks we witness in the media, much of Iraq is calm and our strategy of enabling Iraqis to assume responsibility speedily for their own security is achieving success. The reality that cannot be captured by a television camera is that Iraqis are coming together to expand conditions of security and stability, adding more than 130,000 personnel to the security effort. They join 33 nations, alongside the United States and the United Kingdom, as part of the multinational force.

The number of Iraqis contributing to the security effort is rising steadily. Those Iraqis are actively engaged in operations to stabilize Iraq and to thwart the terrorists who are killing Iraqi civilians, aid workers and Coalition personnel alike. Iraqi security personnel also are being targeted; their courage, commitment to their country and hope for the future are demonstrated by their perseverance in the face of the casualties they have suffered.

The Iraqi Civil Defence Corps is developing capacity to foil saboteurs who target electrical infrastructure, the oil industry and other sectors critical to Iraq's renewal. The Civil Defence Corps has approximately 8,000 personnel on duty and that number will increase to more than 40,000 over the next several months. In addition, there is a facilities protection service to protect Iraq's strategic

infrastructure, Government buildings and cultural and educational assets. The protection service currently has more than 48,000 guards hired and trained, with a desired strength of roughly 50,000 personnel.

Major progress is also being made with respect to the Iraqi police force. Over 60,000 police officers are back on the streets. Looking ahead, 35,000 new Iraqi police recruits will be trained over the next two years in Jordan. We are currently improving the physical facilities at that training site to accommodate up to 3,000 students and 1,000 international trainers and support staff. The first class will begin next week with 500 students. The United Kingdom, Canada, Poland, the Czech Republic, Austria, Slovakia, Slovenia and Finland are planning to contribute police trainers for the Jordan facility. Other countries, including our Council colleague Germany, for example, have indicated an interest in participating in the training process. Following graduation from the eight-week basic course, Iraqi police recruits will participate in a ten-month field training programme at home, led by as many as 1,500 international police advisers. The United States plans to provide up to 1,000 of these advisers, with the first 150 to be deployed in January.

Establishing border security — with Iraqi border posts capable of interdicting the flow of proliferation-sensitive materials, radioactive sources that could be used to create dirty bombs, contraband, terrorists and foreign fighters — is an obvious security priority. Over 12,000 Iraqi border personnel are now on duty and Iraq's border police and customs service will steadily grow to more than 25,000.

As it resumes full control of its affairs, Iraq, like all nations, will need a military for self-defence. On October 4, nearly 700 Iraqi troops graduated from basic training to form the first battalion of the new Iraqi army. By the fall of 2004, the Iraqi army will have expanded to about 35,000 troops.

But force and recruit numbers, although they are headed in the right direction, are only part of the story. The international community has the opportunity and, indeed, the obligation to help the Iraqi people build highly competent organizations that are dedicated to public service and that maintain both high standards of professionalism and respect for human rights. Only through the creation of such an environment can the Iraqi people have public confidence and develop and enjoy a sound economy.

Notwithstanding the considerable efforts I have just described, we must acknowledge that security conditions in Iraq remain a major preoccupation for us, for the international community and for the Iraqi people, and that there remains a need to deliver a sustainable, improved security situation, particularly in the centre of the country. None of us wants a repeat of the terrible events we witnessed through late summer into the fall and which we recognize to have impacted on the international community's civilian presence in Iraq. The aim of the persisting efforts to improve security as I have described, as well as of our efforts to improve basic services and empower the Iraqi people, is to yield the increased stability and security that we all want. We are determined that those efforts shall succeed.

Since I already discussed in detail the national political developments currently taking place in Iraq, I would now like to focus for a moment on political developments at the local level. Iraq's democratic transition is dependant on the vitality and effectiveness of Iraqi institutions at the local level, where most of the decisions affecting individuals are made. Local Government provides the foundation for democracy and promotes social stability by allowing citizens a say in how their Government operates.

Day-to-day operation of the Iraqi Government is now in the hands of Iraqis. Across the country, neighbourhood, district and provincial councils represent the needs and opinions of their constituents to the Iraqi Governing Council. These institutions are taking responsibility for the delivery of essential services and fostering citizen participation in decision-making. There are municipal councils in all major cities and most towns, and provisional governorate councils have been formed across the country. Two hundred neighbourhood advisory councils help provide services such as water, education, public sanitation, health and electricity. More and more councils are budgeting and managing their own resources. For example, in each of Baghdad's 88 neighbourhoods, citizens have freely selected representatives for local governing councils. They, in turn, choose members of nine district councils and a 37-member city council.

Overall, more than 800 democratically selected council members are now hard at work serving their fellow citizens. They include Sunnis, Shias and Christians, Arabs and Kurds — and more than 75 women. Over the coming months, the Coalition will

continue to work with the Governing Council to promote diverse and representative citizen participation within, and among, communities throughout Iraq. Our focus will be on increasing financial transparency and accountability and on strengthening the capacity of local administrations to provide essential municipal services.

The head of the Office of the Iraq Programme, Mr. Benon Sevan, gave a lengthy briefing earlier this week on the phase-out of the oil-for-food programme and yesterday Secretary-General Annan also addressed the issue. I would like to commend Mr. Sevan, the Office of the Iraq Programme and the United Nations agencies that have worked in Iraq under difficult circumstances for their role in providing for the humanitarian needs of the Iraqi people.

Before I conclude and turn the discussion over to Ambassador Jones Parry, I would like to address the disarmament of Iraq. On 16 June, the Iraqi Survey Group assumed responsibility for the mission of searching for and eliminating Iraqi weapons of mass destruction, prohibited missile-delivery systems and related infrastructure. Led by former International Atomic Energy Agency inspector David Kay and United States Army Major-General Keith Dayton, the Survey Group is comprised of military and civilian personnel. The Group includes Coalition personnel from the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia, as well as experts from the former United Nations Special Commission on Iraq — UNSCOM — with direct experience on the ground in Iraq.

The Survey Group is comprised of two task forces — one for exploitation, led by the United States Defense Intelligence Agency, and another for disablement and elimination, led by the United States Defense Threat Reduction Agency. The Survey Group has consolidated the weapons-of-mass-destruction-related efforts of the various intelligence-collection operations currently in Iraq under one national-level headquarters, in order to better exploit developing intelligence. Using quick-reaction teams, the Survey Group has been investigating suspect sites based on leads derived from debriefings, interrogations and tips by Iraqi civilians. The Group is systematically reviewing existing sites already identified by intelligence.

In October an interim report on the activities of the Iraq Survey Group to date detailed numerous violations by Iraq of its mandated obligations under Security Council resolutions. Those included deliberate efforts to conceal equipment and programme activities related to weapons of mass destruction from the United Nations during the inspections beginning late in 2002, clandestine laboratories and safe houses within the security service apparatus that contained equipment subject to United Nations monitoring and suitable for continuing chemical and biological warfare research, and plans and advanced design work for new long-range missiles with ranges up to at least 1,000 kilometres, well beyond the 150-kilometer range limit imposed by the United Nations. A large body of information, developed through debriefings, site visits and exploitation of captured Iraqi documents, confirms that Iraq deliberately concealed equipment and materials from United Nations inspectors when they returned in 2002. This is a large undertaking that will continue to require significant time and resources.

I would like to say a final word in conclusion. Iraqis have a long and proud history. We look forward to continued progress on all fronts as the people of Iraq work to build a new, stable and secure country.

The President: I thank Mr. Negroponte for his comprehensive briefing.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): Continuing where Ambassador Negroponte left off, I would now like to brief the Council on the main points relating to the provision of basic services, economic and reconstruction issues and human rights and justice. I will circulate separately a note that sets outs the details. I will therefore confine myself to the headlines.

Following the fall of the Saddam regime, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) has worked to ensure the rapid restoration of distribution networks and basic services. By August, food distribution systems were fully restored and the CPA's efforts — in partnership with Iraqis and humanitarian organizations — focused on increasing water supply, electricity generation and oil production.

With regard to water and sanitation, projects across the country are providing more and cleaner water to over 14.5 million Iraqis. In Baghdad over 1,700 critical breaks in the water networks have been repaired, 90 waste-pumping stations have been rehabilitated and city-wide rubbish collection has begun. Work is also under way outside Baghdad.

With regard to electricity, work to improve power generation has lead to a peak in supply of over 4,400 megawatts, above the pre-conflict level. The goal is to reach an output of 6,000 megawatts by the summer of 2004, and 9,000 megawatts — which is 2,000 megawatts in excess of estimated demand — during the spring of 2005.

With regard to fuel, there has been a steady upturn in the quantities of oil produced and exported from Iraq, rising most recently to some 2.2 million barrels per day, of which about 1.3 million were exported.

In the transport sector, Baghdad International Airport is being repaired and refurbished as part of a $17.5 million contract. The port of Umm Qasr is functioning at a much higher capacity than it had for many years, with its grain-receiving facility completely renovated. Work has also taken place on some critical road and rail infrastructure.

With regard to communications, work is under way to restore damaged switches and to rebuild Iraq's fibre-optic backbone, permitting inter-city calling and the operation of communications networks for major utilities. Three mobile phone networks are expected to be functioning by January. The goal is to increase the number of Internet connections from 4,500 under Saddam to 50,000 by January, with further increases thereafter.

In the health sector, which is a critical area, nearly all the 240 hospitals in Iraq are now functioning, and no longer is access to health care being used as a political tool. With the help of UNICEF, over 30 million vaccines have been procured and distributed by the Ministry of Health. An estimated 3 million Iraqi children under the age of 5 have been vaccinated, while over 100,000 pregnant women, nursing women and malnourished children have received supplementary high-protein food rations.

In the education sector, most schools had opened by the end of June, with nearly 5.5 million children taking exams in June and July. The Coalition, together with the good work of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), has rehabilitated 1,595 schools, with work on a further 200 ongoing — a programme employing more than 35,000 Iraqis. Iraq's higher education institutes have received 97,000 applications for the 2003-2004 academic year, an increase of more than 50 per cent from previous year. All 22 universities have reopened, as have 43 technical schools.

Turning to economic management, the Minister of Finance announced details of Iraq's 2004 budget on 13 October. For the first time in many decades, Iraq's resources are being used to pay for the needs of the Iraqi people, rather than to finance war mongering, oppression and decadence. Details of the budget, as well as of the status of the Development Fund for Iraq, are transparently available on the Coalition Provisional Authority web site.

A new set of bank notes is replacing the two Iraqi currencies currently in circulation. The exchange, which involves handling more than 2,000 tonnes of new notes, began on 15 October and is proceeding well. The central bank of Iraq is now independent.

Unemployment remains a major challenge in Iraq. New public works have given jobs to many hundreds of thousands, while employment creation programmes have also been introduced. Nonetheless, high unemployment will only be sustainably reduced with the successful transition from a centralized State-dominated economy to a liberalized market-based economy. A credit facility for small- and medium-sized enterprises has been established to foster the growth of indigenous industry. Rules on foreign direct investment have been introduced to bring in new capital. And a new pro-trade tariff regime has been passed by the Governing Council.

These actions, carried out in close consultation with the international financial institutions, should help give both the Iraqi people and the international community new confidence in the public finances and economic management of Iraq.

Ambassador Negroponte mentioned how the international community has been coming together to assist Iraq's reconstruction, as clearly demonstrated at Madrid last month. The needs assessments produced by the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the United Nations Development Group and the $33 billion pledged in response will significantly assist the creation of a prosperous, free and democratic Iraq.

To further help in building their country, it is crucial that Member States rapidly fulfil the obligation under resolution 1483 (2003) to transfer funds of the former regime to the Development Fund for Iraq. Many

Member States are holding considerable assets frozen since 1990. Those funds should not remain idle.

In addition, the international community will need to agree on a fair and sustainable solution to Iraq's external debt problems. The sooner that is done, the sooner Iraq can restore its creditworthiness and access to international capital markets to help finance reconstruction and development. The Paris Club has published an assessment of its members' claims on Iraq, while the International Monetary Fund has requested data from other official creditors. Creditors should now cooperate in order to speed a fair and sustainable solution to Iraq's debt problems.

I want to turn now to human rights, including gender, and the issue of justice. The extent to which human rights were disregarded by the previous regime is illustrated by estimates that as many as 300,000 people are buried in mass graves throughout the country. Investigation of those graves represents an extraordinarily difficult challenge which will take many years.

As part of creating a human rights culture in post-Saddam Iraq, the Coalition Provisional Authority has enacted legislation prohibiting torture and cruel, degrading or inhumane treatment; outlawing discrimination by those holding public office; and ensuring secure and humane prison conditions. The Coalition Provisional Authority and the United States and United Kingdom Governments are also facilitating efforts to strengthen civil society and human rights education — disseminating information and training and supporting the work of local non-governmental organizations.

The newly formed Ministry of Human Rights is a clear signal that there is no place for oppression. We believe that those responsible for atrocities committed in the past should now be brought before an Iraqi-led process. Supported by the Coalition Provisional Authority, a Governing Council committee is drafting the statute and rules of procedure for a special Iraqi tribunal.

On the issue of women, we are actively encouraging the broadest participation in the reconstruction of Iraq, in line with resolution 1325 (2000). We hope Iraqi leaders will view this as an important and crucial part of introducing democracy. The presence of at least three figures now on the Governing Council has given women a base from which to work. However, much more needs to be done to ensure a sustained and powerful voice, especially in the Transitional National Assembly and the Interim National Government.

The restoration of law and order rests, in part, on the development of a fully functioning and effective justice system. A central criminal court of Iraq is now up and running, with jurisdiction over serious crimes committed since 19 March 2003. Separately, more than 600 Iraqi judges preside over some 500 Iraqi courts. Some 300 cases have already been tried. Supervision of Iraq's judicial system is carried out by the re-established Council of Judges, abolished by the previous regime in 1979. The penal code has been amended to include new rights: the right to counsel; the right against self-incrimination; the right to be informed of basic rights; and the absolute exclusion of evidence obtained through torture.

In conclusion, Iraq is a country which has just come out of several brutal decades. It is almost impossible to comprehend the depth of human suffering that has occurred and the damage done by Saddam. It will take decades for the country to come to terms with that suffering.

While this report has understandably focused on areas of progress, no one should underestimate the massive scale of the task ahead or how much more needs to be done. The needs assessments produced in the run-up to the Madrid Conference highlight the enormous challenges. The serious security situation — which we are tackling determinedly — continues to impact on our efforts. And action will also continue to be needed to tackle the legacy of years of underinvestment and misappropriated resources, the legacy of sanctions and the huge level of unemployment. We will need to continue to react and adjust to the inevitable problems and challenges that will arise on the ground.

But in spite of this, Iraq's potential is now immense. Already, working with the talented and creative people of Iraq as well as the United Nations and humanitarian organizations, we have begun to make a difference.

Most crucially of all, we now have a timetable for constitutional reform and elections that will see the country's future squarely where it belongs: in the hands of the Iraqi people. To succeed, they will need the continuing commitment and support of the

international community, as well as the assistance — as circumstances permit — of the United Nations. In that regard, the pledges at the Madrid Conference demonstrated the increasing international unity in providing Iraq with a new start. Recent terrible and desperate attacks, including those against the very organizations that are helping Iraq to rebuild, cannot be allowed to succeed.

The more we can do to make rebuilding Iraq a collective enterprise, the more quickly the Iraqi people will achieve the bright future which they deserve. The regeneration of a free and stable Iraq is in all our interests.

The President: As there is no list of speakers, I invite those Council members who wish to take the floor to indicate this to the Secretariat.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank our colleagues from the United States and the United Kingdom for the briefings they have just given the Security Council, pursuant to resolution 1483 (2003).

I would like to make the following comments.

As my United States and United Kingdom colleagues have noted, significant progress has been made during this period. Some public services have been restored or are in the process of being restored. Most schools and hospitals have thus reopened and are functioning. The production and supply of electricity have for the most part been restored to levels comparable to pre-war levels. The dreaded humanitarian crisis has not taken place. Markets are well-stocked. The distribution of food aid has continued, particularly within the oil-for-food programme. The Madrid Conference brought about an encouraging mobilization for the reconstruction of Iraq.

After three decades of tyranny, more than 12 years of a sanctions regime unprecedented in its severity and three deadly wars, this progress was eagerly anticipated by the Iraqi people. This progress is necessary to restore confidence in the future. Together, we must see to it that this progress continues.

France pays tribute to the work of those, whether Iraqis or foreigners, and whether acting in a national capacity or working for United Nations agencies and programmes or non-governmental organizations, who have taken and continue to take an active part in this progress, at times sacrificing their own lives. I cannot forget to mention here the considerable efforts also made by the member countries of the Coalition, under their responsibilities as occupying Powers.

Unfortunately, this progress, however positive and real, could be eclipsed by the continuation of violence that we have witnessed throughout this same period. Acts of violence and attacks continue unabated, and are becoming ever more deadly, now indiscriminately targeting the personnel of international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the Coalition force and, in particular, Iraqis themselves, who are the primary victims. Given these criminal, horrendous acts, the strongest possible condemnation and punishment are necessary. But that is not enough. Maintaining a state of occupation feeds the Iraqi people's resentment and growing frustration, which are exploited by extremists to extend their audience and to justify violence. That is why we, since the end of the conflict, have been advocating a rapid restoration of Iraqi sovereignty and the end of the occupation.

We therefore welcomed the new approach contained in the agreement signed in Baghdad on 15 November between the Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority. The agreement indeed recognizes that the restoration of Iraqi sovereignty must be the first stage in the political transition, with the establishment of a fully responsible transitional Government. It is in this context that Iraqis will then, at their own pace, be able to define permanent constitutional arrangements and organize elections in order to freely choose their leaders.

We cannot waste this opportunity; it could be our last. We must therefore see to it that this new approach indeed makes it possible to effectively curb the violence and to establish on a solid basis the political recovery and economic reconstruction of Iraq. To achieve this, we need to see to it that the implementation of the Baghdad agreement does not create new divisions, but brings people together. It is a matter of urgency to rebuild a consensus, not only in Iraq at the regional level, but also within the international community.

In order to attain this three-fold objective, we believe that several elements are crucial.

First, there needs to be an immediate expansion of the social and political basis of the political process.

All Iraqis that oppose violence or who agree to give up violence must be involved in this process, including those who thus far have been excluded or have excluded themselves from the process. Every Iraqi should be able to identify with the institutions that will be established.

It is also essential to involve and to hold accountable all of the States of the region, without exception, to enable Iraq to become once again part of its regional environment. It is essential also that the United Nations be allowed, with full independence, to lend its legitimacy and its support to see the transition in Iraq through each of its stages.

We understand the concerns expressed by the Secretary-General regarding the security of his staff. That is why we proposed that, initially, a special envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General be appointed. While not residing permanently in Iraq, that envoy could, at the outset, help to engage Iraqis and countries in the region in the transition process, which would thus reinforce its legitimacy. We hope that the representative that the Secretary-General will appoint in the near future will be able to perform this essential task.

The idea of a national conference under United Nations auspices that would bring together all of the Iraqi sensitivities and all of the Iraqi groups, to which countries of the region should be invited along with others, was mentioned. This idea deserves careful consideration. It could be discussed with the Iraqis.

Finally, the transfer of effective responsibilities to the Iraqis must go on without waiting for the June 2004 deadline, as spelled out in paragraph 6 of resolution 1511 (2003). It is essential that the provisional Government to be established by that date will be able then to exercise full sovereign power over Iraq.

So we welcome the approach adopted by the Baghdad agreement, but it is actually the conditions of its implementation that will determine its success. The change of approach should not be confined to reversing the sequencing of the political transition. It should also be translated into an effort to involve the greatest number of people participating, within and outside Iraq. This effort should be reflected by the Security Council if it were to be prompted to address this new approach contained in the Baghdad agreement.

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): First of all, I would like to thank our colleagues from the United States and the United Kingdom for the update on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1483 (2003), in particular for their assessment of the security conditions and the progress reported in the humanitarian and economic sectors, as well as for their report on the political developments.

As regards the political developments, we take note of the recent conclusion of the agreement on the political process by the Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA). We are encouraged by the decision to introduce a timetable for the transfer of sovereignty to a transitional Iraqi Government and for the reversal of the sequence of the political process. We believe it is an important step forward.

Of course, this plan needs to be evaluated against the background of evolving security conditions. It also needs to be clarified in certain aspects, and it deserves a thorough evaluation. We will also have to examine how the legitimacy of this process of transferring sovereignty can be strengthened. It is important to ask how to create the necessary momentum for the reversed political sequence in order to contribute to a stabilization of the security situation in the country. Therefore, we think that putting the agreement between Mr. Bremer and the Governing Council in a wider international context would help to send the necessary signal to the Iraqis. That signal should be that the process has indeed fundamentally changed.

If we look at the three problems we now face in Iraq — security, reconstruction and the political process — it is obvious, I think, that at present the security and reconstruction business must be dealt with primarily by the CPA. The CPA has a leading role here for the foreseeable future.

On the other hand, of course, security and reconstruction are linked to the political process, and that process should provide the signal necessary to facilitate security and reconstruction in the country. I believe that when we discussed resolution 1511 (2003), the creation of such a political signal was the main gist of the French-German amendment. The change of strategy, as it appears in the agreement between Mr. Bremer and the Governing Council, reflects to a certain extent what we have said in this discussion.

I feel that, in the political process, there are four important elements we should look at. First, we think that a strong United Nations role is imperative to provide the necessary legitimacy to the process until we have an Iraqi Government that has been legitimized by democratic elections. Secondly, I believe we must consider broadening the basis of the political process in order to include all political and societal forces in Iraq that are willing to cooperate in a peaceful manner and to reject violence and terrorism. The third important element is to define and consider the role of the neighbours, because if want to successfully stabilize Iraq politically, economically and in terms of security, we must ensure that Iraq is reintegrated into the region as a new and democratic State. The fourth element is that we should consider convening an international conference — which has already been proposed — that rallies the Iraqis, the neighbours and others in a common effort to stabilize the political and economic process. We have done so quite successfully in another case — Afghanistan. Why should we not repeat that model if it can help to stabilize and advance the process that is now going to begin?

In conclusion, I should like to say that, in the face of growing violence and terrorism — not just in Iraq, but also in other countries, as the past few days have so cruelly demonstrated — it is imperative to create an international order based on cooperation and inclusiveness, with the United Nations as its centre. I think that that is the way to a stable Iraq and the way to return sovereignty to the Iraqi people.

Mr. Muñoz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Ambassadors of the United States and the United Kingdom for their briefings on the situation in Iraq, pursuant to paragraph 24 of resolution 1483 (2003).

The evolution of the situation in Iraq undoubtedly arouses the attention of world opinion, and since the last report received by the Council, we have seen the violent action of partisan elements of the old regime seeking to oppose the changes. Clearly, the task of building democratic institutions in a country that has been governed by despotism is not easy, owing to the resistance of sectors that have lost privileges. In addition, the task of building and achieving peace is always more difficult than that of removing a dictatorial regime.

The actions of the extremists — as we have all been able to see — are directed not only against the Coalition forces, but also against the United Nations and other international organs. The premeditated attack on the central offices of the United Nations on 19 August and the attack against the headquarters of the International Committee of the Red Cross are unequivocal demonstrations of an attempt to isolate the population from the help and influence of the international community. We are convinced that those who perpetrate such criminal attacks are no more than minority groups that cannot represent the feelings of the overwhelming majority of Iraq's population, which, we believe, wishes to have a freer, more democratic and more prosperous society and to live in peace.

Given the prevailing security situation, the Secretary-General has deemed it necessary to temporarily withdraw all international personnel from Baghdad. We regret that decision, but we understand and respect it, for the very reasons for which he adopted it. We know that the work of the United Nations is still being done by local personnel, but we hope that the security situation will enable the Organization to resume its role under resolutions 1483 (2003) and 1511 (2003) as soon as possible. We are aware of the Secretary-General's willingness in that regard.

We wish to join the international expression of grief at the deaths due to the terrorist attacks that occurred in recent days in Baghdad and Nasariah, including today's attacks against hotels and other facilities in Baghdad. It seems that the world is facing the risk of terrorism as never before, and the international community — and some countries in particular — have had a rude awakening to this reality of a threat that knows no borders.

Terrorism uses its support networks on the basis of a globalized system to transfer people, funds and weapons in order to perpetrate terrorist attacks, not only in Iraq, but in many places around the world, as we see daily in the news media. This new global terrorism can be fought only through joint and organized action by the international community, particularly this Organization. So we have before us the challenge of strengthening the measures that the Security Council has taken with regard to the scourge of terrorism.

As part of the international community's global response to terrorism, I believe we must not forget poverty, injustice and the day-to-day misery

experienced by millions of human beings. Those things — together with a lack of hope — provide a breeding ground for the recruitment of extremists.

We noted with interest the announcement, on 15 November, of a plan to transfer sovereignty to the Iraqi people in the coming months, in keeping with the provisions of resolution 1511 (2003). This should include the transference of responsibility for the building of new national institutions in Iraq, within a democratic framework of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as respect for minorities and the broad participation of all democratic sectors, including women.

We are grateful to the United States for the information regarding the announcement by the Governing Council of Iraq about the new institutional arrangements, which anticipate, for the beginning of 2004, the adoption of a framework law that includes procedures for the formation, by mid-2004, of a transitional national assembly made up of people elected by the various provincial councils.

The appointment of a national assembly and a provisional government with sovereign powers will be a decisive step in the devolution of sovereignty — a step for which the Security Council has called. We hope that that process will be completed in 2005, with the election, on the basis of universal suffrage, of a constitutional assembly charged with the task of drafting a new constitution, as a result of which — subject to approval by referendum — an election will be held to choose, for the first time in Iraq's history, a new freely-elected democratic government.

We hope that those arrangements will be formalized to an even greater extent than as was set out in the presentation given by the Governing Council of Iraq to the Security Council. We are, of course, concerned that all of these steps are threatened by the security situation today and, in all probability, for the foreseeable future. However, we are facing an important, decisive step towards the building of a new, more stable, democratic and independent Iraq that is at peace with itself and its neighbours, assisted by the strong and sustained support of the international community in political, human and financial terms, as demonstrated at Madrid.

In conclusion, I would like to say that Chile is ready to cooperate by providing assistance in terms of agricultural development and food for school-age children, as well as with regard to other humanitarian needs that we have identified, with the aim of contributing in some measure to the goal of restoring sovereignty to the Iraqi people and helping to build the basic institutions of a democratic State.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation would like to thank the ambassadors of the United States and of the United Kingdom for their briefings. We have taken note of the efforts of the Coalition Provisional Authority with regard to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1483 (2003). Since the Security Council adopted resolution 1511 (2003), there have been several new developments in the Iraqi situation. I would like to make several comments in this connection.

First, we have taken note of the announcement of 15 November regarding the agreement reached between the Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority. We welcome that agreement, according to which a transitional administration will be established by next June and — before the end of 2004 — the constitutional process and the election of a new Government will be completed. We hope that that will truly contribute to the restoration of full sovereignty to Iraq. We expect the Governing Council, in compliance with the provisions of resolution 1511 (2003), to submit to the Security Council by 15 December, a timetable for the constitutional process and general elections.

Secondly, we have always advocated that a leading role be played by the United Nations in the reconstruction of Iraq. We have also taken note of the aspirations of the Governing Council in that regard. We hope that, when circumstances permit, the United Nations will be able to play, at an early date, a substantive role in the political process in Iraq and in the economic reconstruction of the country. That will be of great significance for the prompt restoration of stability in Iraq.

Thirdly, we are deeply concerned about the failure to improve the security situation in Iraq. We hope that the Coalition Provisional Authority will take further effective measures promptly to improve the security situation there so that an environment conducive to the reconstruction of the country can be created.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We, too, would like to thank Ambassador Negroponte and Ambassador Jones Parry for their briefings. We note that the coalition, together with the Iraqis, are making an active effort to establish normal conditions in the country and to restore the economy and infrastructure. We note that the United States and the United Kingdom have played an important role, together with all other members of the Security Council, in providing for the normal completion of the oil-for-food programme, and have reaffirmed the obligation of the coalition to resolve all outstanding issues.

We also note with satisfaction that the International Advisory and Monitoring Board has finally been established, and we hope that reports from that body will soon be received. It is a key mechanism, set up pursuant to resolution 1483 (2003), to provide for transparency with regard to the Iraqi economy. We also note the efforts to create an Iraqi army, security force, police force and border service. Ambassador Negroponte spoke about that issue in detail. We hope that that work will be quick and effective.

The briefing also noted, however — and we are all aware of this — that the security situation in Iraq remains serious. According to our assessment, it is continuing to worsen. Of course, we condemn all terrorist acts. Whatever the target of such acts, innocent people suffer. Such acts must be condemned and counteracted. We do not have any information about how specific operations are being carried out against those who plan and perpetrate terrorist acts, but we believe that any use of force should, of course, be proportional; every attempt must be made to prevent the suffering of innocent civilians.

We are grateful to Ambassador Negroponte for having mentioned disarmament in his briefing. However, quite frankly, we do not understand why the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) have not endeavoured to obtain more information about the efforts undertaken by the coalition. As we heard, a report was prepared in October by a missing persons survey group set up by the coalition. We do not see why that report could not be transmitted to UNMOVIC and IAEA experts, particularly since we will be receiving a regular report from UNMOVIC very soon.

We did not hear anything in the briefing about persons missing since the first Gulf war, and the theme of Kuwaiti property was not touched on either. But we hope that those questions will be discussed in December, when the regular report of the Secretary-General is submitted to the Security Council — although we are, of course, interested to find out more about what the coalition is doing with respect to these matters and what the results have been.

Like previous speakers, we take note of the agreement that was reached between the coalition and the Iraqi Governing Council. We welcome the desire to give the political process a new dynamism, and Russia has consistently advocated the speeding up of the process of the restoration of Iraq's sovereignty. We do not know why the agreement has still not been transmitted officially to the Security Council. As we understand it, there are two parties to the agreement — the Iraqi Governing Council and the coalition — and either or both of them could transmit the agreement to the Security Council for its information, particularly since reporting to the Council is an obligation on the part of the coalition and of the Governing Council.

Nevertheless, we are, of course, familiar with the text of the agreement. We are somewhat disappointed that there is no mention in it of the United Nations. We believe that that is wrong, for, in order successfully to resolve the Iraqi problem, we need first and foremost the trust of the Iraqi people, and secondly the active participation of the international community. That is our conviction, and all of the events of recent months only corroborate our view.

Like the representatives of France and of Germany, we believe that very serious consideration should be given to the idea of convening an international conference under the auspices of the United Nations in which all the main political forces of Iraq would participate, as well as external players, including Iraq's neighbours and other countries. We believe that this idea should be discussed, and we also consider that, in order to hold a conference as part of this process, a consensus must be reached about how it should be organized.

Given the fact that the security situation in Iraq is getting worse and that attacks are taking place against representatives of international organizations and of new Iraqi structures, we are not ruling out the possibility of that conference's being held outside of

Iraq — again in the context of the analogy of Afghanistan, as mentioned by Ambassador Pleuger.

The conference could form the transitional Government of Iraq, which, together with the Secretary-General and his representatives, could elaborate specific steps in order effectively to implement the political process.

We would like also to ask some questions about the text of the agreement, since we think that it is important. We believe that that members of the coalition and of the Iraqi Governing Council, as well as the United Nations Secretariat, should take these questions into account.

We believe that the timelines for the adoption of the fundamental law by 28 February, for the creation of the Transitional National Assembly by 31 May, and, subsequently, for the formation, by 30 June, of the transitional administration are realistic and are justified. However, with regard to subsequent steps, the timelines do represent a bit of a stretch — for example, the election for the constitutional convention is scheduled to be held only on 15 March 2005, and general elections by the end of 2005.

We believe that it would be better if the date of the election for the constitutional convention, and the date of the general elections — that is, elections for the permanent Government — were decided on by the Transitional Government and by the Transitional National Assembly. They will be functioning by 30 June, and it is possible that they will have a clearer idea about when, realistically, they should hold the appropriate elections.

We also believe that there are certain contradictions between parts of the agreement with respect to the proposal to form organizational committees that could affect future elections — that is, the election of members of the National Assembly.

In the beginning of the agreement, it is stated that the Iraqi Interim Governing Council will not play any formal role in selecting members of the National Assembly. But two lines down, it is stated that the Iraqi Governing Council will nominate five of the representatives of each provincial organizational committee.

Therefore it will be playing a role in that respect — not a formal role, but a very real one. Would this not, therefore, lead to a situation in which certain segments of the population and certain political forces are left out of the process of the formation of these new authorities?

My next question has to do with the provision stating that there is a proposal to conclude, by the end of March 2004, an agreement on security between the coalition and the Governing Council, including an agreement on the status of the coalition forces. We had thought that the status of the coalition forces had been determined in resolution 1483 (2003) and that their mandate had been clarified further in resolution 1511 (2003). So, quite frankly, we are not clear about the new status that is being referred to here.

If this proposed agreement on status is going to be elaborated for the period after 30 June, then perhaps it would be logical to conclude this kind of agreement with the Transitional Government when it is formed, not with the Governing Council, whose authority expires on 30 June.

I should like to ask how you plan to provide for the political presence of countries of the coalition in Iraq after 30 June, after the Coalition Provisional Authority ceases to function. Do you think that the countries in the Coalition will be present in Iraq through their usual embassies, or do you plan to create different sorts of structures for their presence in Iraq? We do not expect immediate answers to these questions. We understand that the situation is still evolving, but we thought it useful to ask those questions, since it is clear that we still have a lot of work to do.

We hope that the role of the United Nations in this process will not be underestimated. It is clear to us that the Iraq problem can be resolved, not so much by adopting new resolutions, but through a radical change of strategy by the international community in that country. We mean that there is a need to involve as many Iraqis with authority as possible in the settlement process, to use the potential of neighbouring countries and to give the United Nations a real chance, not only in words but in actual fact, to have a part in resolving the problem of Iraq. We welcome the fact that the Secretary-General has prepared serious new proposals to increase the work of the United Nations in order to find the best possible solution to the Iraqi crisis. We eagerly await his initiatives.

We hope that today's discussion will be useful and that the views in the Security Council will be taken

into account in the work of the Coalition and that they will also be transmitted to the Iraqis for their information, including to the members of the Governing Council of Iraq. We know there has been a public appeal for the United Nations to participate directly in implementing these very stages of the political process.

Ms. Menéndez (Spain) *(spoke in Spanish)*: We are grateful to the delegations of the United States and the United Kingdom for the report they have just given Council members, pursuant to Council resolution 1483 (2003).

We express our satisfaction with the fact that the presentation of this report has taken place in an open meeting of the Council, since maintaining the security of Iraq and the activities carried out for its political and economic reconstruction are matters incumbent upon the entire international community. Both delegations have given us broad presentations that are extremely useful for a close-up and in-depth view of the present situation faced by the Iraqi people.

Iraq still bears the traces left by three decades of dictatorship that we must not forget: the disappearances, torture and general disregard of human rights. Today we have heard the chilling figure of an estimated 300,000 people in mass graves. Such figures should remain in our memory so that situations of this kind will not be repeated in the future. However, and in contrast, today many of the Iraqi people are experiencing better living conditions than during the regime of Saddam Hussein.

We cannot ignore the fact that Iraq is facing great problems and challenges. Unfortunately, we are now witnessing a proliferation of brutal terrorist actions. These are irrational acts that indiscriminately leave behind victims among the personnel whose mission is to help the Iraqi people and among the Iraqi population as a whole. The only purpose of terrorism in this case is to prevent Iraq from joining the prosperous and democratic nations of the international community. In the final analysis, this is terrorism that seeks to relegate the Iraqi people to obscurity and marginalization. However, the international community will not cease to resolutely help the Iraqi people to prevent that from happening.

I wish to briefly refer to the three main areas that shape Iraq today. First, concerning the economic sphere, we should stress that we are all, in one way or another, contributing to the reconstruction of Iraq, using, to that end, the mechanisms of bilateral cooperation as well as the United Nations agencies which are also doing admirable work. That is a joint effort, as we were able to see at the Madrid conference as well as from the situation on the ground.

As we have heard today, within a short period of time important advances have been made in the supply of water, communications, transport and energy. But we have also been given one fact we find especially significant and indicative of the effort that is taking place — the fact that the budget for 2004 can now be seen on an Internet web page. That is something that would have been unthinkable a few months ago and that expresses the desire for transparency on the part of the Governing Council of Iraq and the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA).

Secondly, in the political sphere we have received information which confirms that the agreement of 15 November has brought about a positive change in the situation in general. Spain welcomes this agreement with satisfaction, because we have always maintained that the responsibilities of government should be transferred to an Iraqi administration as soon as circumstances allow. With this agreement, the Iraqi political process begins to follow the path laid down by resolution 1511 (2003), co-sponsored by Spain, that will lead to the drafting of a fundamental law setting up the legal guidelines for a process of political transition that will, initially, lead to the establishment of a transitional national assembly and the election by that assembly of a provisional Government, to be recognized by the Coalition before 30 June 2004.

In the process of political normalization in Iraq, my Government attaches special importance to the reform of the judicial system, whose independence and proper functioning constitute the keystone of democratic nations.

Furthermore, and again in the political arena, we especially welcome the proposal to establish a high commission for women.

Finally, concerning the security situation in Iraq, my delegation heard with special satisfaction, of the effort that the CPA is making to transfer the responsibility for security to Iraq, which effort includes rebuilding the Iraqi police and army. We have heard that there are now more than 60,000 policemen in the

streets, and by the end of 2004 there will be 35,000 military troops.

It is clear that the security situation is not as good as we would have wished, and the news media frequently convey to us images and events that are a source of concern. However, it is also true that in today's Iraq there are many areas of peace and progress, and for that reason we hope that United Nations personnel will return so that the Organization can continue playing the vital role conferred on it by the resolutions adopted unanimously by the Council. My Government is convinced that all of those activities will redound to the benefit of the Iraqi people and to the formation of a free, prosperous and peaceful Iraq.

Mr. Raytchev (Bulgaria): As others have done, I would like first of all to thank the delegations of the United States and of the United Kingdom for their comprehensive briefings on the situation in Iraq.

We commend the tireless efforts of the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in pursuing its commitment to establish a free, democratic and stable Iraq under the difficult circumstances on the ground caused by acts of terror, violence and intimidation. And we note with satisfaction the active cooperation among the CPA, United Nations agencies and the Governing Council of Iraq, as called for in the relevant Security Council resolutions.

The 15 November announcement by the Iraqi Governing Council of a political process to establish a representative transitional national assembly to assume full sovereignty in 2004 marks a new stage in the gradual, speedy and orderly transfer of authority to the Iraqi people. The new transitional Iraqi administration will take over the full responsibility of governing by the end of June 2004. The Iraqi Governing Council sets a feasible timetable for the electoral and constitutional process, as called for in Security Council resolution 1511 (2003). It deserves the utmost attention of the Security Council and other relevant United Nations bodies that can facilitate its implementation. Those important new developments, in our view, should be welcomed and supported by the international community. They ensure that the day when full sovereignty will be restored to Iraq will come soon.

We appreciate the efforts of the Coalition Provisional Authority to transfer to the Iraqis increased responsibility for their own security and governance and to strengthen the administrative capacity of the representative local and national institutions.

Progress on all tracks in Iraq is clearly tied to the security situation. Security is also a key prerequisite for the resumption of the United Nations presence in the country. Therefore, in our view, the international community should double its efforts to provide the necessary assistance to ensure stability and security in Iraq under the provisions of resolution 1511 (2003) and other Security Council resolutions. Coupled with the new dynamic envisaged for the political process, increased international assistance can help to isolate the terrorists, reverse the current security trend and, finally, improve stability on the ground.

The violence and terror perpetrated by the same forces of the past that oppressed the Iraqi people for decades should not divert the international community from its strong commitment to help the people of Iraq to live in peace and democracy. I would like to reiterate that my country is fully committed to continue its support for efforts to improve the security and stability situation in Iraq. The decision to offer support for the police training programme, announced during the donors conference in Madrid by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Bulgaria, is another example of that commitment.

Security Council resolutions provide for a vital role for the United Nations in Iraq. Facing the degradation of the security situation, the United Nations adopted a new approach, enhancing the role of its local staff in Iraq and the coordination and the management of its activities from a distance. We hope that the international personnel have been only temporarily relocated outside Iraq and that the United Nations will resume its presence in that country as soon as possible, for the benefit of the Iraqi people.

United Nations agencies have a unique expertise and performance record in mobilizing civil society and in drafting constitutional and electoral legislation. In accordance with the provisions of the relevant resolutions, the Iraqi Governing Council could draw on that expertise and experience.

We welcome the forthcoming appointment of a new special representative of the Secretary-General for Iraq, and we will never forget the crucial contribution of the late Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Sergio Vieira de Mello, in the formation of the Iraqi Interim Authority.

Finally, touching on the humanitarian situation, I would like to commend the efforts of the Authority with regard to normalizing the situation with regard to transport, electricity and water supply. The progress achieved with regard to the strengthening of civil society and human rights education and the fully functioning justice system is also commendable. At the same time, with a view to healing the humanitarian situation, the United Nations Development Group remains, in our opinion, best prepared to act and deliver aid in cooperation with the CPA. We commend the consistency and continuity in managing the relevant humanitarian programmes on the ground, including the CPA's decision to re-employ the former local staff of the oil-for-food programme in the activities supervised by the Development Fund for Iraq.

Mr. Mekdad (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): We have listened carefully to the statements by the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom on the implementation of Security Council resolution 1483 (2003). We have also listened carefully to the colleagues who have preceded me in taking the floor.

Syria has clearly expressed its position vis-à-vis the Iraq problem before the Council on many occasions. More than once, we and other States members of the Security Council have suggested ways to overcome the tragic situation in Iraq. Syria is not merely a country that neighbours Iraq; since the dawn of time history, geography, destiny and common interests all have bound the peoples of our two brotherly countries together. In recent weeks, visits to Damascus by many representatives of the Iraqi people with various political affiliations — including a large number of the Iraqi Governing Council — show that relations between the two peoples and the two countries are very deeply entrenched.

In order to help our Iraqi brothers to overcome the daily hardships they face, tons of food supplies, as well as other items of humanitarian assistance, have been shipped to Iraq. In addition, the Syrian electricity grid has been connected to the Iraqi one in some places in order to help meet the basic daily needs of the Iraqi people.

On 1 and 2 November 2003, Damascus hosted an important meeting of foreign ministers of neighbouring countries, including the Foreign Ministers of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iran, Turkey, Kuwait and Syria, as well as Egypt. In that meeting current developments in Iraq were discussed as well as their repercussions both regionally and internationally. In view of the importance of the outcome of the meeting, I would like to outline the major points agreed upon by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the neighbouring countries.

There is a need for Iraq's neighbours to show full solidarity with and sympathy towards Iraq in its current plight because of the grave deterioration in the security situation, as well as the general economic and living situation in the country. Any measure that may lead to a division of Iraq must be rejected, and Iraq's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity must be respected. We stress the right of Iraqis to determine their own political future and the importance of a strong, vital role for the United Nations in Iraq, particularly in supervising the constitutional and election processes and setting a timetable for the end of the occupation. There is the speeding up of the transfer of power to the Iraqis themselves, supporting the efforts of the Iraqi Governing Council in its transitional responsibilities towards the election of a representative Iraqi Government, and reasserting the responsibility of the Coalition authorities in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions and international law. Terrorist bombings that target civilians and essential humanitarian institutions, international organizations and diplomatic missions are condemned, and the need to find the perpetrators and bring them to justice for their criminal acts is stressed. Finally, there is a call to competent Iraqi authorities to cooperate with neighbouring countries in order to eradicate the threat of terrorism and to avoid any infiltration through borders of neighbouring countries by terrorists.

We have considered the declaration by the Governing Council on the political processes to take place in the coming period in Iraq. In this regard, and along with other members of the Security Council, we await the Governing Council's presentation of a timeline and programme for drafting a new constitution and holding democratic elections in accordance with the terms of paragraph 7 of Security Council resolution 1511 (2003).

Syria believes that any plan to save Iraq from its current situation must involve all sectors of the Iraqi population with all various social and political affiliations. This would ensure the territorial integrity, sovereignty and political independence of Iraq. We

believe that it is necessary for the United Nations to have a major, effective and vital role in both political and humanitarian activities in Iraq.

We also stress the major role that neighbouring countries may undertake in attempting to solve the various problems now facing Iraq. In that regard, we need the expertise and capabilities of the United Nations as the only organization with such abilities and potentials.

Our brothers in Iraq are now undergoing a most difficult period in their history because of the prevailing chaos and the lack of a dignified life. Syria, a country that is tied to the people of Iraq by history and geography, cannot but be concerned at developments taking place in Iraq today. Proceeding from this, we believe that preserving the fundamental interests of the Iraqi people, ensuring a life of dignity for them and restoring the conditions for social and political stability in the country also serve Syria's interests.

We would therefore renew our appeal, which is accepted by most members of the Security Council, to work to put an end, as soon as possible, to the occupation of Iraq so as to maintain its territorial integrity and the unity of its people and to ensure the election of a national Government that fully and faithfully represents all segments of Iraqi society and that would lift the plight currently endured by the Iraqi people. We look forward to Iraq regaining its sovereignty and the role that befit its history, civilization and capabilities.

Mr. Pujalte (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mexico takes note of the report presented by the ambassadors of the United States and the United Kingdom, representing the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), concerning the situation in Iraq.

We are encouraged by the signature of the 15 November agreement between the CPA and the Governing Council to initiate a political process aimed at the election of a transitional national assembly to assume sovereignty of Iraq in 2004. We believe that there should be an international follow-up mechanism to strengthen legitimacy and give transparency to this process. Unquestionably, the fact that Iraqis are assuming control of their country will have a direct impact on pacification. Improving security conditions will enable not only the reactivation of normality in social and economic activities of the country, but also, very importantly, will help bring about the return of personnel of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations, who will help supervise conditions for the Iraqi people.

With regard to disarmament, let me point out that non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is important because of the threat they represent, but with equal determination, the international community should act in controlling small arms and light weapons, explosives and munitions. Unfortunately, as shown by the attacks in recent days, terrorism today uses explosives and small arms and light weapons. Despite that fact, there is no international legal instrument regulating illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons, explosives and munitions.

Today, there is the technology and the ability to determine the origin of explosive materials. This Council could go from words to acts and adopt a resolution containing obligations with respect to the production, sale and brokerage of this kind of weapon. Such an act unquestionably would have an immediate and concrete impact in the fight against terrorism.

With regard to human rights, we believe that the grave violations that took place under the previous regime in Iraq should be investigated, and the various models of justice applied by transitional regimes to prevent crimes from going unpunished should be examined.

To conclude, I should like to pose two questions to the representatives of the CPA. First, is there coordination by the Authority with neighbouring countries? If so, could you give us information about that, about what kind of coordination is taking place with neighbouring countries? The second question is, does the Authority have criteria, or has it established criteria, to distinguish between terrorists, former members of the old regime, Iraqis resisting foreign presence, and ordinary criminals?

Mr. Tidjani (Cameroon) (*spoke in French*): First, I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this Council meeting pursuant to paragraph 24 of resolution 1483 (2003). Cameroon welcomes the decision of the United States and the United Kingdom to report to the Council on behalf of the Coalition that is provisionally co-administering Iraq. Their excellent briefings have drawn a candid and very complete picture of circumstances in Iraq with respect to the humanitarian situation, combating insecurity and

terrorism, reconstruction and, above all, the process of reappropriation by the Iraqis of the administrative, economic and political management of their country.

While we appreciate all the information we have just received, I wish to stress two or three points. My country particularly welcomes the acceleration of Iraq's reassumption of the management of its cities, towns and villages. The rapid and well-managed transfer of power to the Iraqis is today essential. The Iraqis are undoubtedly grateful to their liberators of 8 April, but they are a proud people that has inherited a civilization that is millenniums old.

It is good that the Coalition, in its recent initiatives, has taken these decisive points into consideration. The accelerated political timetable is excellent news that the international community must approve and support. The orderly transfer of power is essential to a recognized, credible Iraqi authority with full responsibility for governing the country. Of course, beyond June 2004, the Iraqis will still need many kinds of assistance from friendly countries and their neighbours. Like others, I recognize the unprecedented effort of the United States in approving an $87-billion spending package, $20 billion of which are earmarked exclusively for the reconstruction of Iraq.

The security situation in Iraq is especially alarming today, requiring an imaginative and proactive collective response from the international community. We believe that the current international situation calls for alert but in-depth thinking on this issue, since the terrorist factor is now undeniably present. In any event, however, combating insecurity in Iraq must be primarily the responsibility of the Iraqis themselves. My delegation feels that the ongoing systematic reconstruction of an army and an effective republican police force is a good omen, even if more immediate tasks must be addressed first.

This meeting is being held on the very last day of the oil-for-food programme. We have discussed that fact at length all week, but I wish to endorse the Coalition's approach to assuming the work of the programme. The Coalition's activities will employ Iraqi personnel and structures that have proven effective in managing the humanitarian situation in Iraq, including Cotecna for the authentication of goods and the World Food Programme for distribution. We appreciate such pragmatism and reliance on the United Nations legacy.

In conclusion, I reiterate our full faith in the ability of the Iraqis to meet these challenges. They survived tyranny and in the future will certainly be able to overcome the insecurity posed by terrorism and, in particular, rapidly to meet the challenges of reconstruction and re-appropriation of their country. We support them in this Herculean endeavour and are grateful for the onerous burden assumed by the Coalition at the cost of great sacrifice, notably in human lives. We reiterate our sympathy to the countries that have been victims of attacks and to the bereaved families.

Mr. Khalid (Pakistan): First, we are grateful for the briefings given by the United States and United Kingdom Ambassadors. The briefings have helped us to broaden our understanding of the complexity of the situation as it exists in Iraq and the efforts being made by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) to mitigate it.

At this stage, our comments will be preliminary. We will be able to comment more substantively on the ongoing developments after receiving the Governing Council's formal response to resolution 1511 (2003).

We have heard with interest the briefings today on the political process in Iraq. We share the concern that any new development in Iraq should lead to consensus-building and the healing of wounds. We have always advocated an approach whereby all developments on the political and security fronts should be supported and welcomed by Iraqis. The Iraqis should be allowed to control and steer such developments and there should be a broad-based agreement in the region and beyond on the implementation of the process currently under way.

We have noted various procedures to elect the Constitutional Convention and the Transitional National Assembly. The conclusion of the agreement between CPA and the Governing Council is indeed an important development with respect to these procedures. The Security Council is still awaiting a formal indication from the Governing Council, pursuant to its obligation under resolution 1511 (2003), of the procedure and time-line for the drafting of the constitution. The Council's continued engagement with the evolving situation and its views on the agreement will be important for the purposes of legitimacy.

We have also noted the provision for the drafting by the Governing Council, in close consultation with

CPA, of the fundamental law. It would be desirable for the law to be drafted by the Iraqi people as independently as possible, taking into account their national, cultural, ethnic and religious sensitivities.

The agreement on the political process speaks of the agreement with CPA on security. We would appreciate comments from CPA on bilateral agreements contemplated by the end of March 2004. The question is: What will be the status of these agreements? Will they expire with the end of CPA and the Governing Council?

Lastly, the involvement of the international community, through the United Nations, in supporting the reconstruction process in Iraq and assisting the Iraqi people to stabilize the situation in their country will remain critical. There is a need to create an enabling environment to allow the United Nations to play its due role in Iraq.

Mr. Sow (Guinea) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank Ambassador John Negroponte of the United States of America and Ambassador Sir Emyr Jones Parry of the United Kingdom for their important briefings.

My delegation is pleased to welcome the progress made in the process of rebuilding Iraq, especially as regards the restoration of national and local institutions with a view to the establishment of a representative Government. We welcome the political agreement signed in Baghdad on 15 November between the Iraqi Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority on the timetable for the gradual restoration of sovereignty to the Iraqi people. That timetable was called for in Security Council resolution 1511 (2003). My delegation hopes that the Council will soon receive an official communication regarding the timetable from the President of the Iraqi Governing Council so that we may hold a more in-depth discussion, examine the timetable's implications and eventually consider adapting the United Nations mission to the political, humanitarian and security situation.

In that regard, my country welcomes the political will expressed United States President Bush, which he echoed during his official visit to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland during his talks with his British counterpart, Mr. Tony Blair. That was a commitment to take appropriate measures leading to an improvement of security and stability in Iraqi and the creation of conditions to enable the Iraqi people to quickly determine their political future. We hope that that resolute commitment on the part of the principal leaders of the member countries of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq will contribute to the establishment of a new framework for political and institutional devolution to the Iraqi people, in support of the peace, stability and harmonious development of the countries of the region as a whole. As Ambassador Negroponte emphasized, that offensive phase needs to be strengthened through the firm support of the international community and, in particular, through greater involvement by the Security Council.

In that regard, my delegation appreciates the vital role that the coalition continues to acknowledge exists for the United Nations in the political and economic recovery process and in the provision of humanitarian aid in Iraq. As described in the reports, it is of course essential to quickly carry out the timetable for political transfer and to give priority attention to strengthening security in the country. That would entail the widest possible mobilization by all the people of Iraq, as well as by the countries of the region and the neighbourhood, vis-à-vis the agreed programme contained in the timetable to ensure the transfer of sovereignty and responsibilities. We believe that a new political logic is taking root that is likely to contribute to further strengthening the work of the Governing Council, which is daily seeing its powers and responsibilities expand.

Finally, we await the report of the Secretary-General on the overall situation in Iraq that we hope will be issued in December. We hope that it will provide us with an overview of current developments. We also hope that the report will point out ways and means of ensuring the active participation of the United Nations in the implementation of the timetable for the transfer of power and resources to the Iraqi people.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Angola.

I would like to thank Permanent Representatives Jones Parry and Negroponte, of the United Kingdom and the United States, respectively, for the wealth of information they have provided to the Council on the situation in Iraq and with regard to meeting the challenges faced in reaching the objectives set by the Coalition Provisional Authority to make Iraq a nation that is fully integrated into the international community.

I would like to highlight three points in my intervention. I would first like to refer to the concern that has been consistently expressed by the Security Council and by its members over the situation and about the future of Iraq.

In resolution 1483 (2003) the Security Council stressed the right of the Iraqi people to freely determine their own political future and to control their own natural resources, encouraged efforts by the people of Iraq to form a representative Government based on the rule of law, and reiterated its resolve that the day when Iraqis govern themselves must come quickly. Those were unequivocal principles set out in resolutions adopted unanimously by the Council, translating the commitment of the international community for a rapid restoration of Iraq's sovereignty.

Secondly, the security situation in Iraq has been a permanent concern of the Security Council and its members. That was clearly spelled out in resolution 1511 (2003), which determined that the provision of security and stability is essential to the successful completion of the political process, and authorized a multinational force to take every necessary measure to contribute to the maintenance of security and stability in Iraq. The Security Council once again expressed its concern about the future of Iraq, as well as its willingness to contribute to the rapid stabilization of the situation, unanimously placing its weight and authority behind the Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority for the attainment of a rapid stabilization of the security situation in Iraq.

Thirdly, we are encouraged by the steps taken by the Governing Council of Iraq and the Coalition Provisional Authority. We are also heartened by the agreement reached on the political process, in response to a Security Council invitation addressed to the Governing Council in resolution 1511 (2003) to provide a timetable and a programme for the drafting of a new Constitution for Iraq and for the holding of democratic elections under that Constitution. In our view, the political sequence set out in the agreement on fully restoring sovereignty to Iraq is a good sign providing a good framework to move Iraq's political process forward. It is our expectation that the benchmarks established in the 15 November agreement will be fulfilled and that, by the end of 2005, a new Government will take over that will have been elected under the new Constitution. Hard work lies ahead for the two entities — the Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority — especially in a country where daily life has been deeply disrupted and the security situation is shaky.

In conclusion, we encourage the Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority to relentlessly pursue the blueprint established in the agreement. The road ahead may prove to be rocky, hard and treacherous. But it is our expectation that, under the agreement, a framework will emerge enabling the Governing Council and the Coalition Provisional Authority to make progress in the stabilization of the security situation in the country, and that a democratic State based on justice and the rule of law will finally emerge in Iraq.

This is a challenge that we must also face in the Council, as the United Nations, in spite of all the risks involved, is called upon to play a leading role — a role which I think is made more visible by the new political agenda which has been provided by the Council's agreement on resolution 1511 (2003).

I now resume my position as President of the Council. I invite Ambassador Negroponte to respond and comment on the interventions by the various members of the Council.

Mr. Negroponte (United States of America): First, let me thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this meeting today and express thanks for the helpful and constructive comments and questions that have been provided by other members of the Council.

I am not going to try to answer all the questions that were raised here at this meeting. I think there will be opportunities, for example, when the Governing Council submits its formal report in accordance with the timetable of resolution 1511 (2003). We have already been talking with our Bulgarian colleagues about finding a suitable date in the middle of December for scheduling consultations on the subject of Iraq, at which time I think we will be in a position to answer some of those questions in more detail.

But, meanwhile, let me address several of the key points that have been made today. There have been a number of comments to the effect that the security situation in Iraq is alarming. While we would certainly agree that there are some very serious security problems, indeed — and, as I mentioned in my formal remarks, particularly in the centre of the country — there are vigorous steps being taken by the coalition

and by the Iraqis to deal with those questions. We are confident that with the ongoing efforts that are taking place, this situation will be dealt with, and we are determined to assist the people of Iraq in creating the kinds of security conditions that will permit the Iraqi people to live in political peace and in economic prosperity. I outlined for the Council a number of the specific measures that are being taken to bolster Iraqi security capabilities, and I hope, at our next discussion of these questions, to be able to report to the Council even further progress in that regard.

I also mentioned that both President Bush and Prime Minister Blair appealed to our international partners to increasingly participate in the multinational force. I think that it would be yet another way of contributing constructively to the security difficulties that Iraq currently faces. Such participation could take the form of training Iraqi police or military forces. Thus, there are a number of ways in which the international community can be further helpful to the country and the people of Iraq in ameliorating their security conditions.

Lastly, with respect to security, since there has been some mention of the role of regional countries, clearly one of the areas where the regional countries, particularly the neighbours of Iraq, can be helpful is by assisting the security forces of Iraq and the coalition in bringing the borders of Iraq under as tight a control as possible.

Let me turn briefly to the role of the United Nations since that subject was very much on the minds of a number of the delegates who made comments. The essential or basic role of the United Nations, as far as we can see it, is laid out in resolutions 1483 (2003) and 1511 (2003). In my remarks today, I emphasized and repeated what is our well-known position: we believe that the United Nations has a vital role to play in Iraq and we would welcome the return of United Nations international personnel to Iraq to carry out the mandates that have been ascribed to them in the pertinent resolutions. We stand ready to discuss with United Nations officials appropriate security support as envisioned under resolution 1511 (2003).

I might also take this opportunity to note that, of course, it is not only United Nations international personnel that are involved; there are 3,000 to 4,000 national personnel of the United Nations working in Iraq itself. Now, some of those numbers will be reduced with the termination of the oil-for-food programme, but there are still significant numbers of United Nations personnel working inside Iraq, carrying out various humanitarian programmes. I think we all pay tribute to the heroic efforts that those individuals are making under very difficult circumstances.

There were a number of questions about the political process, particularly from our colleague from the Russian Federation. I think in most instances I will perhaps await the report of the Governing Council to the Security Council, but I want to mention a couple of points. Ambassador Lavrov asked whether the electoral process would take place rapidly enough, referring to the 15 March 2005 deadline for electing a constitutional convention and then the 31 December 2005 deadline for electing a new Iraqi Government. I would point out that those are the outer limits. I would hesitate to predict that those elections could be conducted sooner than that, but I would point out that the agreement stipulates elections and a constitutional convention no later than those dates.

Secondly, I think the essential point with respect to the political process is that the question of drafting a constitution and electing the final Government of Iraq has now been separated from the question of creating an internationally recognized transitional Government, which can happen much sooner as a result of the 15 November agreement. I think that was the important point: to decouple the question of recognizing a sovereign transitional Government of Iraq and allowing some time for the drafting of a constitution and the holding of elections.

Lastly with respect to that question, I would point out that in the very example that has been frequently cited to us in this regard, namely Afghanistan, there has been quite a period of time between the establishment of a transitional Afghan authority and the current process of drafting a constitution with a view to conducting full-scale national elections. That process has already taken more than two years and will run into 2004.

The question of inclusiveness in the political process was raised by a number of delegations. I think that the mechanism that has been described in this agreement between the coalition and the Governing Council does not exclusively limit the Iraqi role to those who are in the Governing Council. There are also provincial and local councils which will be involved,

and efforts are going to be made to ensure the largest possible degree of inclusiveness in this process.

I would like to address just one last set of questions that was put to us by Ambassador Pujalte of Mexico, in which he asked if there is a mechanism for coordination with neighbouring countries. I believe the Governing Council has definitely reached out to all the neighbouring countries and, as you know, one of the policies of the coalition has been to encourage the Governing Council to be as active on the diplomatic front as possible. We have seen a variety of evidence of that, including the Governing Council's participation in Arab League meetings, in meetings here at the United Nations and at the Madrid Conference.

The Ambassador of Mexico also asked about criteria for distinguishing between the various kinds of individuals who might be carrying out some of these terrorists acts in Iraq, whether they are common criminals, or former members of the Baath party or international terrorists. I do not think I can provide an authoritative or definitive answer on that question. Most indications we see point to a probable mixture among all these elements. We also believe that the more the coalition and the Iraqi security forces are able to capture, detain and identify former Baathists — one-time members of the Saddam regime who might be involved in these activities — the more likely the prospect of bringing the security situation under control. But, clearly, this is the kind of question to which we will be able to develop increasingly better answers as time goes on and our intelligence efforts improve.

Those would be a few of my preliminary responses, and, as I said, we will go back over the various questions that have been raised today and look forward to answering them in more detail at a future date.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): If I may, I will adopt the same approach as Ambassador Negroponte has. I begin by expressing appreciation for the comments, the questions and the tonality of the questions.

As far as the security situation is concerned, we are trying to tackle it with particular determination, while bearing in mind that, increasingly, it will be for the Iraqis to assume responsibility for their own security. Developing the indigenous capacity is thus very much part of the policy.

I agree with those who have argued that security cannot be tackled in isolation from the political aspect, but there is no simple answer as to whether we must tackle the political aspect before the security aspect or vice versa. The answer is that both processes have to be tackled.

As Ambassador Negroponte said, a better-coordinated approach to intelligence throughout the country is basic. I do not think the criteria for determining who is responsible for the actions is actually the issue. More importantly, we must identify the threat and then act to neutralize it. Frankly, it does not matter where the threat comes from, we have got to get better at prevention on the basis of good intelligence.

We have sought today to give a briefing on the basis of an agreement that everybody has seen, that is on a web site and that is wholly consistent with resolution 1511 (2003). The primary ownership of that agreement is with the Iraqis, so it is for them to communicate formally. But we have sought, in our explanations, to give our understanding of it. There will be a time to consider exactly what it entails and what it constitutes when we have had a formal transmission. But, as I understand it, the Iraqi Governing Council is fully aware of and is working to address the need to meet a deadline and to have that transmission take place quickly.

We recognize, as, again, I hope do all the members of the Iraqi Governing Council, the need to maximize the basis of participation in the caucus elections for the transitional assembly, to ensure that it is actually as representative as possible. It is worth bearing in mind that the caucus election is itself a form of national conference. How, where and when that should be held, again, are matters for the Iraqis, so it is premature for us to try to answer that. But it is clear that the Iraqi Governing Council will have a role — but not a controlling position — in how that assembly is put together.

As far as the United Nations role is concerned, the United Kingdom very much agrees with what Ambassador Negroponte has said. I can separate out three distinct roles: the humanitarian, the developmental and the political. Two of those roles are now being pursued very actively by the United Nations. If we can go beyond that, so much the better and the sooner the better, bearing in mind the capacity

that is available and, in the phrasing of resolution 1511 (2003), the "as circumstances permit" clause, which is crucial. But as far as the United Kingdom is concerned, the sooner the United Nations role is enhanced and the sooner we can take advantage of the many opportunities there are now to interpose the United Nations in a political process, so much the better.

The importance of the relationship with neighbours has been stressed quite rightly. The Governing Council has embarked on visits to some of the neighbours. Can I just add, from the view of the Coalition Provisional Authority, that Jeremy Greenstock, late of this parish, has visited three of the neighbouring capitals for discussion at the highest possible level. But what there is not, at the moment, is a formal machinery to bring together all the neighbours.

Much was said about the military agreement. The practical issue is how and when one can begin to discuss what security arrangements should apply when the transitional Government is in place. And that is why those discussions will take place shortly, because of the military deployments. In terms of being responsible, you have to have those discussions. Our assumption, and, more importantly, an assumption of the Iraqis, is that an international security presence will be available and will be necessary after a transitional Government is put in place.

So the question is, on what basis should that force then be constituted? It will not be the multinational force envisaged in resolution 1511 (2003), it will be something else. But it will operate at the invitation of an Iraqi Government. I hope that it will be recognized in some way by a resolution of the Security Council.

But the technical problems are there to be addressed, not least that of timing, because the multinational force will have come to an end, before there technically is a transitional Government in place. So that phasing needs to be sorted out, but it is not actually all that difficult. The Coalition Provisional Authority's formal role will come to an end with the creation of the transitional Government. The occupation, technically, will come to an end at the same time. But, as President Bush and Prime Minister Blair said earlier this week, our commitment to the long term in Iraq is clear. The United Kingdom is prepared to continue to provide assistance as part of the international support effort to that provisional transitional Government. But it will be that Government that will have the primary responsibility and obligation to ensure the security of Iraq. We will need to sort out the details, all of us, with the Iraqi ministries and with the arrangements in place. But as far as the United Kingdom is concerned, we again anticipate that bilateral assistance after 30 June will be funnelled through an embassy or a bilateral assistance office.

I would just like to stress one thing about dates. Discussions as to whether some of the dates envisaged in the agreement are too soon or too late actually miss the point. They are indicative dates. What remains to be seen is how the Iraqis themselves actually fit in their wishes against the calendar. But, for the most part, it must be for them to determine how they should work.

In conclusion, despite the problems and the challenges, much is being done. I hope we have persuaded the audience today that, in fact, the effort to produce new facts on the ground has been successful: we have done a lot notwithstanding the security problems, but, of course, a huge amount of additional work needs to be done. Such progress will merit — and indeed will require — continuing commitment by the international community. But we owe it to Iraq to stay the course and see it done.

The President: I thank Sir Emyr Jones Parry for the clarifications he has provided.

There are not further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.